

Introduction to Development & Volunteering Officer

Mary Anne Stokes joined us in early October as our new Development and Volunteering Officer, bringing a variety of skills from over fifteen years in the not-for-profit sector. Beginning her career as a family support worker with Sophia Housing and later with Focus Ireland, Mary Anne went on to do further study and then worked in international development. This included time with Trócaire and VLM, where she prepared volunteers for education projects in Africa.

Mary Anne will be building on ELI's relationships with our corporate partners while seeking to bring new partners into the fold. If you are interested becoming involved in our work please contact Maryanne.stokes@ncirl.ie / 086-4666438



Early Learning Initiative

Newsletter



Early Learning Initiative
National College of Ireland

Welcome to a new Decade - Happy 2020



Together, we can change lives through education

You, our partners, play an essential role in the future development of ELI. Thank you for your interest, commitment and support. Let us continue to partner in constructing a better brighter future.

Do you know that 65% of children entering primary school today will work in a job that doesn't yet exist? As adults, they will be applying for jobs in advanced robotics, autonomous transport, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, genomics. One thing is certain, change won't wait for us. ELI's 2020-25 Strategy is focused on ensuring that through our multi-sector partnerships and collaborations that children and young people will have the personalities, creativity and skills to thrive in a changing world.

As you are all aware, there will be big differences in children's language and mathematical development at 3 years of age, if there is no one to talk, read and play with them every day. This is why ELI's programmes start from birth with home visiting. With 2,000+ families and 60,000+ home visits taking place since 2007, we are delighted that home visiting was included in the First Five A Whole of Government Strategy for Babies, Children and their Families 2019-2028. Today, ELI is supporting 9 ParentChild+ areas in Dublin, Limerick, Galway and Louth as well as collaborating with other Community Mothers sites, the Katharine Howard Foundation, HSE and Tusla on a Sláintecare project to develop a standardised national model and dataset for the Community Mothers Programme.

Described as ambitious and innovative, ELI will continue, with your help, to develop pioneering, programmes that meets the needs of children, families and services. Our first Home Visiting children are now entering secondary school so over the next year we will be asking them, their parents and teachers: How they are getting on? Have they got the 5 top skills needed for jobs in the future? How can we continue to support them as they enter second level? Is there anything else we need to be doing? The learning from this study will inform ELI's future programmes.

5 Top Skills for 2040

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Adaptive Thinking
3. Creativity
4. Social Emotional Intelligence
5. Cross Cultural Competency

EVENTS

- Numeracy Week takes place from 3rd to 7th of February
- Love Education (early years) takes place on 14th of February
- NCI Challenges - Table Quiz takes place in March
- ELI Afterschool Coding Club tournament week commencing 6th of April
- Educational Guidance and Language Cafe will be held in March
- RP Upskilling Training February 27th – March 27th

Zoom Ahead with Books will run in the junior primary classes during March 2020 with exhibition events in April and May 2020

Corporate, government and individual support is fundamental to our success. We wish to thank all of our socially minded corporate, government and individual supporters, including: Colin and Nikki Ryan, Joseph E. Corcoran and Keith Ennis, who play such an active role in the advancement of ELI.

The Area Based Childhood Programme



0-2 Programme & Parent Support



A new baby means new beginnings but can also bring new challenges including isolation. Our Home Visiting Programmes and Parent Groups aims to involve families within their local area. This helps to strengthen their support network and build communities of the future. As a new parent it is important to remember:

- Trust your instincts and believe that you know your baby best.
- Remember to look after yourself as your baby needs you fit and healthy.
- Getting out for air even for 10 minutes a day is good for the health of you and your baby.
- Check out what groups are on in your local area i.e. parent baby group, breastfeeding support, baby massage etc (most of these are free of charge)
- Go easy on yourself, take any help that is offered and take it one day at a time

Parent Child + “A strong foundation for the future”

Quality early years experiences lay the foundation for all subsequent learning. Childhood is small window of opportunity for parents to promote learning through play. Parent Child + is a research-based home visiting programme for children and their parents. We believe that parents are their children's first and best educators. Home Visitors model best practice while introducing activities that promote early literacy, early numeracy, language development, cognitive skills, social skills.

Numeracy Programme

The early numeracy programme provides support for children to learn about various mathematical concepts such as shape, space, measurement and symbols through active learning experiences. For example, during the last numeracy week in November 2019, parents engaged in a variety of activities with their children on the theme ‘Symbols of the Environment’. They went on walks to find symbols such as traffic lights and road signs. This fun enjoyable activity helped parents improve their children's oral language skills as they named and discussed the various symbols they saw. At home, parents and children read books, sang songs and played games using symbols. All these activities will ensure that these children have the Math's language, skills and concepts for further education and life.



ELI Afterschool Coding Club

Coding is a way to teach a computer how to do something. Just like we teach children to read and write, to add and subtract, to develop socially and emotionally, it is as important to teach them how to code. From September to December 2019 we had five primary schools with 100 children who participated in the coding club, and in 2020 our aim is to encourage more children and young people to participate. Coding is the skill of the future. As one Corporate volunteer told the children, ‘You are either a programmer or you are programmed’



RP Parenting – Parent Support Champion

We are delighted to announce that Sonya Goulding, our Restorative Parenting Coordinator has been appointed by Tusla as a Parent Support Champion for the North East Inner City.

Her role will be to promote parenting, family wellbeing and Tusla's Parenting Support Strategy, within the NEIC area.

Strategic Outcomes of Tusla's Parenting Support Strategy

1. Parenting Support is integrated into the work of Tusla and partners and is included in **local service planning and practice**.
2. Tusla and partners are using **evidence** to inform effective parenting support.
3. **A range of parenting supports** are available across the lifecycle and they are accessible and timely.
4. Parenting supports provided are **engaging and participatory**.

Restorative Practice New Year, New Question?

As we all start to settle into a new year and a new decade, some of us might also be getting to grips with some New Year's resolutions. Often these New Year's resolutions involve some sort of changes in thinking, lifestyle or how we relate to others.

For this new year, what about trying a more restorative approach?

For example: when you are met with conflict, mistakes or misunderstanding, instead of asking ‘why did you do that?’ ask ‘what happened?’. The response to this simple change in language will surprise you!



Educational Guidance ‘You can't be what you can't see!’



If you've never met an IT Programmer how would you know if you'd like to be one? If you've never met the CEO of a multinational firm, how do you know if you have the skills to follow in her footsteps? If you've never met a GAA All-star, how do you know that you couldn't lift the Sam Maguire?

...Because you can't be what you can't see!

Educational Guidance is a project-based learning programme that enables students to explore jobs, workplaces and their own career aspirations. It helps to raise awareness among students (and their parents) of the importance of third level education. This year for the first time, ELI will run a pilot programme for first year secondary school students in the NEIC.

During the programme, students explore different careers as well as engaging with corporate volunteers with lots of different jobs and employment journeys.

We can't promise you will be a Financial Analyst, but we can promise a variety of exciting fun opportunities to explore what you want to be...?